

Supreme Judicial Court
John Adams High School Essay Contest
Spring, 2006

Topic:

Article 29 of the Massachusetts Constitution provides for the separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government "to the end it may be a government of laws and not of men [people]." Similarly, the United States Constitution establishes a system of federal government also based on, among other things, the separation of powers among the three branches of government.

What does John Adams mean by a government of laws and not of people? How does the separation of powers help to ensure a government of laws? Give some historic or modern examples to support your view.

Contest Rules and Regulations

Eligibility The contest is open to all Massachusetts students currently enrolled in **grades 9-12**.

Rules

1. Each school may submit up to two essays.
2. Each essay must be the student's original work and have never been published before.
3. The essay should be **750 words** or less and must be typed.
4. No identifying information should appear on the essay. Each essay must be accompanied by a **cover sheet** including the student's name, address, home telephone number, school name, grade, teacher's name, and name and title of the school official submitting the essay.

5. Entries must be submitted in **triplicate**. Students should retain an electronic version of their essays if possible.
6. Essays will be judged for effectiveness, creativity, and originality. Style, content, grammar, spelling, and punctuation will all be considered.

Deadline Entries must be received in the Supreme Judicial Court no later than **April 7, 2006**. Late entries and entries submitted by individual students will not be eligible; no e-mail entries, please. **Mail entries and queries to: Attorney Sandra Lundy, Supreme Judicial Court Essay Contest, Supreme Judicial Court, John Adams Courthouse, One Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108.**

Prizes The first prize winner will receive a \$500 savings bond; the second prize winner will receive a \$200 savings bond; the third prize winner will receive a \$100 savings bond; and there will be an honorable mention award. A Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court will visit the first-place winner's classroom to talk with students. All winners will receive award certificates signed by the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court and will have copies of their essays displayed in a public gallery in the Adams Courthouse, Boston. Electronic copies of the winning essay and other outstanding essays may, with permission, be posted on the John Adams Courthouse Education Resource Center's website: www.mass.gov/courts/jaceducation. ***This website also includes an electronic resource guide where students may find citations to useful online research resources.***

Notification The winners will be notified **on Law Day, May 1, 2006**.